

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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News Release

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North Carolina National Wildlife Refuges Closed Due to Federal Government Lapse in Appropriations

Manteo - The Federal Government will be closed as current funding expired on September 30, 2013. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is very much aware that any lapse in appropriations imposes hardships on those we serve. Due to this event, Alligator River, Pea Island, Mackay Island, Currituck, Pocosin Lakes, Roanoke River, Mattamuskeet, Cedar Island, Swanquarter, and Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuges will be closed to the public.

For programs experiencing a lapse in appropriated funding, only limited functions would continue, such as those necessary to respond to emergencies and to protect human life or property. While a lapse in appropriations remains in effect, public access to Service properties will be prohibited and fish and wildlife management activities and public programs will be cancelled.

Refuge Manager Mike Bryant explained further, "This means all public uses of these national wildlife refuges cease completely - no hunting or fishing- even hunts for which people have been issued special permits, like the Pungo Hunt scheduled for this week. It means no birdwatching, no walking on the beaches or trails, and no driving to see bears. It means that these federally-owned lands are closed. The closure also includes Visitor Centers and offices. For Refuge employees, it means no work. No checking emails, no posting on web pages, no management activities, and no public programs- on- or off- refuge. The few Refuge staff we have working will be limited to activities that protect of life and property or communications internally concerning the closure."

Additional information is available at DOI.gov/shutdown and oneINTERIOR.gov, as well as at OPM.gov, which will contain information about the government's operating status on Tuesday, October 1, and the days following.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.